

**FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
INTERNATIONAL ACTIVITIES**

International Activities

Part 530 General International Activities

Chapter 2 International Protocols, Treaties, and Conventions

530 FW 2

2.1 What is the purpose of this chapter? This chapter summarizes the provisions of the international agreements, treaties, and conventions for which we have substantial responsibilities.

2.2 What is the scope of this chapter? This chapter:

A. Focuses only on those agreements for which International Affairs has significant input or provides substantial logistical, financial, or diplomatic support during the course of negotiations for these agreements, and

B. Does not describe domestic laws that apply to these agreements.

2.3 What are the authorities for this chapter? See 530 FW 1 for a list of all the authorities for Part 530.

2.4 What is the difference between a protocol, a treaty, and a convention?

A. The difference between a protocol, treaty, and convention is:

(1) Protocol: A protocol is an agreement that diplomatic negotiators formulate and sign as the basis for a final convention or treaty. The treaty itself may not be completed for many years.

(2) Treaty: A treaty is an agreement where the parties to it negotiate to reach common ground and avoid further conflict or disagreement. It is normally ratified by the lawmaking authority of the government whose representative has signed it. In the United States, the Senate must ratify all treaties.

(3) Convention: A convention begins as an international meeting of representatives from many nations that results in general agreement about procedures or actions they will take on specific topics (e.g., wetlands, endangered species, etc.).

B. The Service usually is not an active participant in treaties as this is the jurisdiction of the U.S. Department of State. The U.S. Department of State may ask us for our position on issues during the negotiation of a treaty.

C. We are active in a number of conventions that involve issues specific to our mission, such as conservation and protection of species and their habitats.

2.5 What are the principal protocols, treaties, and conventions for which the Office of International Affairs is involved?

A. The agreements that represent the bulk of the work we conduct in the International Affairs Program (see 530 FW 1 for other agreements) are:

(1) The Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES),

(2) The Convention on Wetlands of International Importance Especially as Waterfowl Habitat (Ramsar Convention),

(3) The Convention on Nature Protection and Wildlife Preservation in the Western Hemisphere, and

(4) The Canada/Mexico/U.S. Trilateral Committee for Wildlife and Ecosystem Conservation & Management.

B. See Exhibit 1 for detailed information about each of the agreements.

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2.6. Why are these agreements important to the Service? Although we focus on domestic wildlife and its habitat, wildlife has no political boundaries. Ecological and social importance of some species not native to the United States, migratory patterns, and global wildlife trade influence the long-term viability of non-domestic species. Because the American people look to us as a world leader in conserving species, Congress has enacted laws and ratified many environmental and wildlife treaties that require us to perform activities and complete projects that are international in scope.

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